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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 002234

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TAGS: PREL KIRF KWBG IS

SUBJECT: MFA CLAIMS POLICE VIDEO PROVES LACK OF SETTLER PROVOCATION AT AL-AQSA

REF: TEL AVIV 2227

Classified By: DCM Luis G. Moreno, Reason 1.4 (b) (d)

¶11. (C) In light of the Palestinian Authority's decision to request a special session of the UN Human Rights Council linking the Goldstone Report to "events at Al-Aqsa," Foreign Minister Lieberman convinced the Israel National Police to authorize MFA to use a police video of disturbances on the Temple Mount/Haram Al-Sharif September 27. According to MFA Deputy Director General for the Middle East Yacov Hadas, the police video, taken by a hidden camera on the Haram side of the Mughrabi Gate, definitively proves that the police did not allow any members of the Temple Faithful Jewish extremist organization to enter the Gate, September 27. Instead, the clash with the police that morning was due to the police effort to protect two French Christian tourists, who were walking on the Haram and came under attack by a crowd of Muslims in an apparent case of mistaken identity. The video reportedly confirms the account of the incident cited by MFA officials in reftel, and contradicts Palestinian and Arab media accounts alleging that the police incited the incident by escorting a group of Temple Faithful activists through the Mughrabi Gate.

¶12. (C) Hadas told PolCouns October 12 that he had showed the video to Jordanian Ambassador Al-Ayad, who reportedly was stunned by the evidence that the Arab media accounts were false. Al-Ayad reportedly phoned the Al-Aqsa Waqf officials on the spot, and the Waqf admitted that the Israeli police version was in fact the truth, i.e. no Temple Mount Faithful members entered the Haram and the disturbances resulted from the attack on the French tourists. Hadas dismissed media reports that Jordan had threatened to expel the Israeli ambassador in Amman over "Israeli provocations" against Al-Aqsa, saying that the Jordanians know perfectly well that there were no provocations..

CUNNINGHAM